

CLAIMS

1. A method of administering consumer items over a global network, the method comprising:
 - (a) compiling a user profile relating to desired consumer items;
 - (b) accessing a database of items available from product and service providers, and identifying relevant items according to the user profile;
 - (c) if the user profile incorporates an automatic best choice service, automatically implementing the relevant items, and communicating the implemented relevant items to the user; and
 - (d) if the user profile does not incorporate the automatic best choice service, communicating the relevant items to the user, and enabling the user to selectively implement the relevant items.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein step (a) is practiced by monitoring a pattern of consumer item use.
3. A method according to claim 2, wherein step (a) is further practiced according to user-entered parameters.
4. A method according to claim 1, further comprising periodically repeating steps (b)-(d).
5. A method according to claim 1, wherein in step (b), the relevant items are identified based on a lowest cost consistent with the user profile.
6. A method according to claim 1, further comprising consolidating billing for the implemented relevant items according to steps (c) and (d).
7. A method according to claim 1, wherein the communicating in steps (c) and (d) are performed via electronic mail.
8. A method according to claim 1, wherein the consumer items comprise subscription services.
9. A method according to claim 1, practiced on a one-time basis to effect a purchase of a particular product.

10. A method according to claim 1, practiced to effect a change of service from one vendor to another.

11. A method according to claim 1, practiced to effect a sale of one product and purchase of a replacement product.

12. A method according to claim 1, wherein step (c) is practiced by identifying related items separately and in combinations that are available at low incremental cost, and communicating the identified related items to the user.

13. A method according to claim 1, further comprising informing the user if one or more parameters in the user profile significantly affects costs.

14. A method of obtaining and maintaining consumer items including products and services at a lowest available cost over a global network, the method comprising:

(a) compiling a user profile according to a pattern of customer use and user-entered parameters;

(b) maintaining a database of items available from product and service providers;

(c) accessing the database of items and identifying relevant items according to the user profile;

(d) if the user profile incorporates an automatic best choice service, automatically implementing the relevant items, and communicating the implemented relevant items to the user; and

(e) if the user profile does not incorporate the automatic best choice service, communicating the relevant items to the user, and enabling the user to selectively implement the relevant items.

15. A method according to claim 14, further comprising periodically repeating steps (b)-(e).

16. A method according to claim 14, wherein in step (c), the relevant items are identified based on a lowest cost consistent with the user profile.

17. A method according to claim 14, further comprising consolidating billing for the implemented relevant items according to steps (d) and (e).

18. A method according to claim 14, wherein the communicating in steps (d) and (e) are performed via electronic mail.

19. A method according to claim 14, wherein the consumer items comprise subscription services.

20. A method according to claim 14, practiced on a one-time basis to effect a purchase of a particular product.

21. A computer system for administering consumer items, the computer system comprising:

at least one user computer running a computer program that compiles a user profile relating to desired consumer items and accesses a database of items available from product and service providers, the computer program identifying relevant items according to the user profile; and

a system server running a server program, the at least one user computer and the system server being interconnected by a computer network, the system server maintaining at least a portion of the database of available items and effecting implementing of the relevant items according to user preferences,

wherein if the user profile incorporates an automatic best choice service, the computer program automatically implementing the relevant items, and communicating the implemented relevant items to the user, and

wherein if the user profile does not incorporate the automatic best choice service, the computer program communicating the relevant items to the user, and enabling the user to selectively implement the relevant items.

22. A computer program embodied on a computer-readable medium for administering consumer items, the computer program comprising:

means for compiling a user profile relating to desired consumer items;

means for accessing a database of items available from product and service providers, and for identifying relevant items according to the user profile;

if the user profile incorporates an automatic best choice service, means for automatically implementing the relevant items, and for communicating the implemented

relevant items to the user; and

if the user profile does not incorporate the automatic best choice service, means for communicating the relevant items to the user, and for enabling the user to selectively implement the relevant items.